

Judith Miller, Dan Rather, Sinclair Broadcasting, Indymedia:
the evidence of the past month alone makes it pretty clear
that media consolidation is a tool for political
manipulation and repression, not information. Mr. Powell:
lets not put another nail in the republic's coffin without
at least full slate of public hearings on this fundamental
matter of self governance. I call on you to hold an
official public hearing in my state.

Before the disastrous 2003 decision to weaken media
ownership rules (which a federal court has now overturned),
you held only one official public hearing. Further, FCC
officials met behind closed doors 71 times with major
broadcasters – but only five times with public interest
groups. And to justify your actions, you used deceptive,
industry-sponsored research data.

The will of Big Media had been heeded at the expense of
American citizens and democracy itself. This has to end.
Before you rewrite the ownership rules, I demand an official
public FCC hearing in my state, impartial and verifiable
research, and transparent debates.

It is time to put the needs of democracy – a diverse,
skeptical, independent and competitive media system – ahead
of profit-hungry media giants.